

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE # SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



Great Expectations

John the Baptist had been praying for a Messiah, but Jesus wasn't what he had expected. Perhaps he had been expecting a fire-and-brimstone leader who would arrive in the manner of a king or a warrior with all the power and status to conquer the oppressor. Instead, the Messiah turned out to be a man from humble origins whose mission was simply to heal and teach God's love. In today's gospel we see an imprisoned John send a message to Jesus. "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Ever the psychologist Jesus sends a 'work it out yourself' kind of answer. Jesus asks John to look at the evidence. "...The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed."

That even John had a moment of doubt in Jesus is very comforting for the rest of us. The message seems to be that it's okay to have doubt, what's important is how we respond to that doubt. A good starting point is to examine how our doubts have arisen in the first place. John's doubts spring from his expectations. Based on his belief that Rome was the enemy, perhaps John thought that the Messiah would come and 'sort the Romans out'. Of course 'sorting the Romans out' wasn't what Jesus was about at all, this would have been an extremely myopic mission for the Son of God.

So what do we think God is about? Are we guilty of myopic expectation? Do we have lapses in faith when we pray hard, only to be disappointed when God fails to cure an ailing grandparent; fails to get us our dream job; fails to make the partner of our dreams appear on the doorstep? Or do we have greater expectations? Do we believe that God is there to change us; guide us through our daily choices; prepare us for his Kingdom. As John was invited, so too are we, to look at the evidence and work it out for ourselves.

Bite Size

"Error is not always the result of a want of education, but often a lack of power to comprehend the truth." ~ James Lendall Basford

**PARISH PRAYER - Father, pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new faithfulness to your Word, and a new consecration to your service; that your love might grow among us and your Kingdom come.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen**

Useful links: Diocesan Website: <http://www.rcdea.org.uk>
Notre Dame High School, Norwich: Website <http://www.ndhs.org.uk>

PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART AND ST MARGARET MARY [Reg. Charity 278742]

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11TH DECEMBER 2016 - 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (*GAUDETE SUNDAY*)

Sunday Masses - Page 88 of Parish Mass Book

Saturday	6.00 pm	Donor's Int.
Sunday	9.00 am	Int. People of the Parish
	11.00 am	Int. Marjorie Long

Music for Sunday Masses - Setting: Dom Gregory Murray Mass

Entry 6pm - *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 112 - O come, O come, Emmanuel (vv. 1-4) ...

Offertory Hymn 851 - Awake, awake, fling off the night ...

Communion *Instrumental Interlude/Sacred silence* ...

Recessional 11am - *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 112 - O come, O come, Emmanuel (vv. 5-7) ...

CONFESSION/RECONCILIATION: Saturday at 5.30pm, or on request / by appointment

Weekday Mass Times (3rd week of Advent) [*Psalter Week 3*]

Mon.	10.00 am	Advent FERIA - Int. Kalavryta Massacre 13 Dec. 1945 (*Fdn.)
Tues.	No Mass today	St Lucy
	7.30 pm	Queen of Peace Prayer Group - in Emmaus Room
Weds.	10.00 am	St John of the Cross - Int. Manuel do Monte De Abreu
Thurs.	10.00 am	Advent FERIA - Int. Maria Heald
Fri.	10.00 am	Advent FERIA - Int. John Perkins
	5.45 pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Silent Prayer
	6.15 pm	Evening Prayer (Vespers)
Sat.	10.30 am	Advent FERIA - Donor's Int.
	6.00 pm	4 th Sunday of Advent - Int. Tony Harmer & George and Agnes Harmer

*Fdn. = Foundation Mass

The Parish Newsletter (incl. back copies) is available to view on the parish website from Friday onward each week.

Anniversaries this week: John Hauzoter, Mary Rayner, Ethel Seabrook, Bridget Earthy, Fred English, Evelyn Flanagan, Pat Chapman, Gabriel Shelley, Frances Shaw and Margaret Doherty. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.*

Hospital Visits – If you or family members are admitted to the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital (NNUH) or Queen Elizabeth II Hospital (QEII), King's Lynn, and would like a visit from the Roman Catholic Chaplain, please call either St John's Cathedral, Norwich (01603 624615) for visits to NNUH, or Fr Peter Rollings (01553 772220) for visits to QEII. If you would like to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick before going to hospital, please contact Fr. Brendan on 01362 694066.

Sick List - Please pray for: Joan Blakiston, David Peek, Robert Nicol, Shirley Liebenhals, Sarah Chaudri, Anne & Derek Williams, Michelle Smith, Rita Smith, Eileen Brockleby, Pat Howe, Kathleen (Jenny) Rudd, Ellen Flood, Margaret Leggett, Peter Brown, James Maxwell and Pamela & Catherine Evans.

Money Matters – The collection last week amounted to £406.12. Standing Orders for the parish in November amounted to £472.00. Thank you all very much for your generosity. **Today**, there is a retiring collection for the Diocesan Dependent Priests' Fund.

Diary Dates for this week –

- Weds. 14th Dec. – UCM meets – 11am in Emmaus Room
- Fri. 16th Dec. – Confirmation Candidates meet – 7.15pm in Emmaus Room
- Sat. 17th Dec. – Saturday Club meets - 11.00am in Emmaus Room (*final rehearsal of Nativity play*)

Gaudete Sunday - Gaudete Sunday is the third Sunday of Advent in the liturgical calendar of the Western churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion, and liturgical Protestant churches. The Latin 'Gaudete' is translated as *Rejoice*, the first word of the introit. The reference to joy, hope and optimism are dominant at this point in Advent. The lesson we can take from this is that Christians ought to be the most hopeful and cheerful of people, bringing both joy and peace into their homes and families, workplaces, and social circles.

Nativity Tableau and Carols - Parishioners are invited to the Nativity Tableau and Carol Singing which will be held in the Church this year on the afternoon of **Sunday, 18th December 2016 at 2pm followed by refreshments.**

Union of Catholic Mothers – The UCM meets this week on Wednesday, 14th December, in the Emmaus Room at 11 am. Please bring just one small plate of food to share, for our seasonal celebration. The Raffle will be drawn at that meeting, so that prizes can then be distributed to the lucky winners. A list of winning tickets will be placed on the noticeboard next weekend.

Forty Hours Devotion. This devotion commences when the Icon of Our Lady of Mercy, which was produced by the young people who attended the Vigil at the Cathedral last year, comes to Dereham next Sunday, 18th December. Ours is the last parish in the Diocese to host the Icon. Thinking about how to do the Forty Hours Devotion. A lot of help is needed here. I am not sure if we can complete the entire 40 hours, but we will do the best we can. We could start with a period of exposition after daily Mass. With a rota of people making a commitment for one hour. Two people would be required at all times. We could achieve that if we had enough volunteers. Ideas, suggestions etc to me please.

Dec. 26th St. Stephen's Day. (Boxing Day) - All of our wonderful Altar Servers are asked to attend Mass and renew their commitment in the Guild of St. Stephen. Mass will be at 12.00 noon.

SVP Christmas Time Appeal - The St Vincent de Paul Society have launched their Christmas Time Appeal, but they're not asking for money. Instead they're asking for parishioners to give a little of their time to help others by joining our parish SVP group. As you plan your Christmas celebrations, spare a thought for those who dread the festive season. For many it's a time of profound loneliness and solitude, while for others it means not being able to afford the family presents or delicious foods that the rest of us take for granted. But giving a little of your time to help those in need could help change that and it might be the best gift you've ever given. To find out more please contact Deacon Martin.

Epiphany Candlelight Mass - Sunday 8th January at 5pm - For all young people and their families across the diocese. Followed by hot dogs, a bonfire and fireworks. There will be a collection of presents for children who are refugees (please bring wrapped presents and indicate whether suitable for a boy or girl or either, and approximate age). Held at The White House, 21 Uppgate, Poringland, Norwich. Organised by the Diocesan Youth Service.

Looking ahead a bit - In February of this year we held an Open Parish Meeting which was very well attended and enjoyed by all. I propose to have another such meeting to present the accounts to the parish and hear the treasurer's report. It is also an opportunity to hear reports from the other groups active in the parish. As at the last meeting, the Agenda will be set by parishioners. I would like to re-form the parish Social Committee with new members. This year we are unable to hold The Parish Lunch at Yaxham Village Hall and so the Children's Nativity celebration will take place in the church on Sunday, 18th December at 2.00 pm. There will be refreshments etc.

	CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES
	◇ Sat. Dec. 24: Christmas Eve - 6.00 pm & 10.00 pm.
	◇ Sun. Dec. 25: Christmas Day - 10.00 am.

The 10.00 pm Mass on Christmas Eve will be the 'Midnight Mass' – preceded by Christmas Carols at 9.30pm.